January 1, 2009

Welcome New Members!

Richard Williams (mountaindoctor@verizon.net)
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Please direct inquiries about membership to the SGS website's About Us page.

News You Can Use

Happy New Year!

2009 Dues

The 2009 membership dues are now due. If you joined in October – December, 2008, your membership is good through 2009. Checks for membership dues ($25) should be made payable to the Southern Gold Society and mailed to David Crenshaw, P.O. Box 237, Dacula, GA 30019. Thank you!

Member's Discussion Board

The board is a member benefit. Only members will be allowed to post. Otherwise, visitors may login as a guest to read posts.

To login the board, select Login at the bottom of the site's Home page.

On your first visit, you will need to register. Your username is the first initial of your first name plus your last name. For example John Smith would be jsmith. Next, type a password.

All new registrants have to be approved by the administrator, so all you can do on your first visit is register. Once the administrator accepts your registration, you will receive an email notification. Then, the next time you login you will go to the forums.

Speaking of forums, we need forum moderators. Moderators are individuals who look after the forums from day to day. They have the authority to edit or delete posts and lock, unlock, move, delete and split topics in the forum they moderate. Generally, moderators are present to prevent users from going off-topic or posting abusive or offensive material.

The forums are General Discussion, Charlotte Mint, Dahlonega Mint, New Orleans Mint (David Ginsburg, moderator), Bechtlers, and Templeton Reid.

The board is a work in progress. Please send us your comments.

Writer's Needed

One of the purposes of the SGS is to "enjoy each member's knowledge." This newsletter is one of the ways this numismatic knowledge is dispersed. *The frequency of the newsletter is driven by the number of submissions for publication*. The editor of the SGS eNewsletter needs new material and welcomes the opportunity to review your original article for publication. Articles should be relevant to the study of the gold coins and related history of the Dahlonega, Charlotte, and New Orleans branch mints and private minters Templeton Reid and the Bechtlers. If you do a presentation at a gathering or other venue, consider compiling your notes into an article. Do not worry about the grammar. The editor will do the rest. Electronic manuscripts should be submitted by email to dcnumisma@charter.net.

Feature

The Officers of the Branch Mint at New Orleans (Up to the Civil War)
By David Ginsburg

As many of us know, the Library of Congress contains a wealth of information for any researcher. In addition to its enormous book catalog and collections of photographs and maps, the website contains a section devoted to the actions of Congress, including laws enacted, legislation proposed, presidential appointments and many of the annual reports of Cabinet officers.

As a result, in the *Statutes at Large*, we can read the Act of March 3, 1835 that established the three southern

Dahlonega's Gold
By Anne Dismukes Amerson

Dahlonega's Gold brings to life America's first major Gold Rush, the trail of Tears, the Civil War, and other turbulent events in both Dahlonega's and America's history through the experiences of Keziah Hamilton Cochran. >> read more

branch mints and directed that their officers (Superintendent, Treasurer, Assayer, Chief Coiner, Melter and Refiner) be appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate, and the Act of February 13, 1837 that combined the positions of Melter and Refiner in New Orleans, (and the positions of Superintendent and Treasurer, and Assayer, Melter and Refiner in Charlotte and Dahlonega).

In addition, in the *Senate Executive Journal*, we can trace the nominations and confirmations (or refusals) of each Branch Mint officer, as I have done for New Orleans Mint up to the Civil War.

(Note: The information in the *Senate Executive Journal* for each nomination is rather brief and is not particularly fussy about accuracy. For example, John L. Riddell was appointed Melter and Refiner of the New Orleans Mint as "John Riddel" and confirmed as "John Riddle". The information from the *Senate Executive Journal* is supplemented by information from "United States Branch Mints" by John Riddell that appeared in the June 1847 issue of De Bow's *Commercial Review*.)

Superintendent
The first man President Andrew Jackson (Democrat) selected for the position of Superintendent of the New Orleans Mint was Martin Gordon, who was nominated on December 19, 1836. However, he apparently declined the nomination and the Senate never confirmed him.

In his place, David Bradford, nominated on February 24, 1837 and confirmed by the Senate on March 2, 1837, became the first Superintendent.

Mr. Bradford served only a few years, however, as he was replaced by Joseph M. Kennedy, who had been commissioned by President Martin Van Buren (Democrat) during the Senate's recess, nominated on January 23, 1840 and confirmed on March 13, 1840.

When Vice President John Tyler (Whig) assumed the Presidency following the death of President William Henry Harrison, he was apparently determined to replace Superintendent Kennedy. On Feb. 21, 1842, President Tyler forwarded to the Senate the nomination of James H. Caldwell to replace Mr. Kennedy, who is referred to as "removed." (I infer that he hadn't actually been removed, but that President Tyler wished him to be replaced by Mr. Caldwell, hence "removal" rather than "resignation", and the actual replacement would occur when Mr. Caldwell arrived at the Mint.)

In any event, on June 13, 1842, the Senate declined to confirm Mr. Caldwell. On July 18, 1842, President Tyler renominated Mr. Caldwell, stating "The accompanying memorials from citizens of New Orleans, believed to be gentlemen of high respectability, have been received by me since the rejection by the Senate of James H. Caldwell as superintendent of the branch mint at that place. I have therefore felt it to be due not only to the memorialists but to Mr. Caldwell, and respectful to the Senate , to submit them to its consideration, and to enable the Senate to review its former decision, if it shall be so inclined, with the aid of these new and highly important testimonials."

Acting quickly this time, the Senate declined to confirm Mr. Caldwell on July 21, 1842.

Not one to give up, President Tyler, on July 23, 1842, nominated William M. Carpenter. On August 31, 1842, the Senate indefinitely postponed consideration of the nomination. (Presumably that stopped what promised to be President Tyler's continual efforts to replace Mr. Kennedy - who was either popular with the Senate himself, or else President Tyler was unpopular.) In any event, although President Tyler served until March 1845, he made no further attempt to replace Mr. Kennedy.

President James Polk (Democrat) apparently made no effort to replace Mr. Kennedy, so it wasn't until mid-1850 that President Millard Fillmore (Whig) replaced Mr. Kennedy with Robert McAlpin during the Senate's recess and submitted his nomination on December 16, 1850. Mr. McAlpin was confirmed by the Senate on January 23, 1851.

Mr. McAlpin also served only a few years, as he was replaced by Charles Bienvenu, who was nominated by President Franklin Pierce (Democrat) on April 6, 1853 and confirmed by the Senate on April 6, 1853.

Mr. Bienvenu served nearly five years, before he was replaced by Logan McKnight, who had been commissioned by President James Buchanan (Democrat) during the Senate's recess, nominated on February 23, 1858 and confirmed on March 1, 1858.

Mr. McKnight resigned less than three months later, however, and President Buchanan, on May 26, 1858, nominated William A. Elmore, who was confirmed by the Senate on June 3, 1858. Mr. McKnight served until the Civil War.

Treasurer
The first Treasurer of the New Orleans Mint was Edmund Forstall, who was nominated by President Van Buren on March 9, 1837 and confirmed by the Senate that same day.

Mr. Forstall served nearly three years and was replaced by Horace C. Cammack, who had been commissioned by President Van Buren during the Senate's recess, nominated on January 23, 1840 and confirmed by the Senate on March 13, 1840.

Mr. Cammack served nearly six years and was replaced (in May 1845) by John B. MacMurdo, who had been commissioned by President James Polk (Democrat) during the Senate's recess, nominated on January 3, 1846 and confirmed by the Senate on April 1, 1846.

Mr. MacMurdo served nearly five years, before being replaced by I. I. Wickes, who was nominated by President Zachary Taylor (Whig) on March 13, 1850 and confirmed by the Senate on April 16, 1850.

Mr. Wickes served only a few months, as he was replaced by William De Buys, who had been commissioned by President Fillmore during the Senate's recess, nominated on December 16, 1850 and confirmed by the Senate on January 23, 1851.

Mr. De Buys served about three years before being removed and replaced by John M. Bell, who was nominated by President Pierce on April 6, 1853 and confirmed by the Senate on April 8, 1853.

Unfortunately, Mr. Bell declined the position and wasn't replaced until James Brewer was nominated by President Pierce May 17, 1854 and confirmed by the Senate on May 19, 1854.

Mr. Brewer served about four years until he resigned. He was replaced by the current Mint Coiner, Anthony J. Guinot, who had been commissioned by President Buchanan during the Senate's recess, nominated on February 23, 1858 and confirmed by the Senate on March 1, 1858. Mr. Guinot served until the Civil War.

Melter and Refiner
The first Melter and Refiner of the New Orleans Mint was James B. Rogers, who was nominated by President Jackson on February 24, 1837 and confirmed by the Senate on March 2, 1837.

Mr. Rogers served only briefly, resigning within a few months. He was succeeded by James Maxwell, who was nominated by President Van Buren on September 18, 1837 and confirmed by the Senate on September 25, 1837.

Unfortunately, Mr. Maxwell died in 1839. He was replaced by John L. Riddell, who had been commissioned by President Van Buren during the Senate's recess, nominated on January 23, 1840 and confirmed by the Senate on March 13, 1840.

Mr. Riddell served nearly eight years, before being removed by President Polk, who, on December 19, 1848, nominated Pierre Auguste Bertrand to replace him.

However, Mr. Bertrand declined and President Polk, on January 18, 1849, nominated Maximilian F. Bonzano, who was confirmed by the Senate on January 26, 1849 and served until the Civil War.

Coiner
The first Coiner of the New Orleans Mint was Rufus Tyler, who was nominated by President Jackson on February 24, 1837 and confirmed by the Senate on March 2, 1837.

Unfortunately, Mr. Tyler died in 1839. He was succeeded by Philos B. Tyler, who had been commissioned by President Van Buren during the Senate's recess, nominated on January 23, 1840 and confirmed by the Senate on March 13, 1840.

The second Mr. Tyler served about seven years before being replaced by President Polk, who, about February 28, 1847, nominated John Brooks, who was confirmed by the Senate on March 3, 1847.

Mr. Brooks served about three years, before being succeeded by Augustus Devall, who had been commissioned by President Fillmore during the Senate's recess, nominated on December 16, 1850 and confirmed by the Senate on January 23, 1851.

Mr. Devall served about two years before being removed by President Pierce. He was succeeded by Anthony J. Guinot, who was nominated on April 6, 1853 and confirmed by the Senate that same day.

Mr. Guinot served as Coiner for about five years before being appointed Treasurer. He was succeeded by Benjamin F. Taylor, who had been commissioned by President Buchanan during the Senate's recess, nominated on February 23, 1858 and confirmed by the Senate on March 1, 1858. Mr. Taylor served until the Civil War.

Assayer
The Assayers at the New Orleans Mint were, by contrast, remarkably long-lived:

The first Assayer was William P. Hort, who was nominated by President Jackson on February 24, 1837 and confirmed by the Senate on March 2, 1837.

Mr. Hort served nearly fourteen years, before being succeeded by Howard Millspaugh, who was nominated by President Fillmore on February 28, 1852 and confirmed by the Senate on August 4, 1852. Mr. Hort served until the Civil War.

Mission Statement

The Southern Gold Society was formed to increase the enjoyment and study of Southern gold coins and related history, through an informal, relaxed mix of education and fellowship. The society is reminiscent of those of a bygone era, in which connoisseurship and a gentlemanly appreciation of Southern gold coins is the order of the day.

Purpose

- To facilitate the enjoyment and study of the gold coins and related history of the Southern branch mints (Dahlonega, Charlotte, and New Orleans) and private Southern minters (Templeton Reid and the Bechtlers).

- To enjoy each member's knowledge and friendship in an informal manner.
- To provide a relaxed, pleasant environment in which to meet during selected coin shows and other convenient events.
- To encourage the appreciation and preservation of a Southern gold coin's original surfaces.
- To consolidate the information, resources, and talent available to enthusiasts of these historic Southern gold coins.

Annual Membership Fees

Regular $25 (January-December).

Membership for new members joining in October, November, or December extends through the next year. Checks for membership fees should be made payable to the Southern Gold Society and mailed to **David Crenshaw, P.O. Box 237, Dacula, GA 30019-0004**.

Board of Directors

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